

# McEneny talks

By MARY LANNON

Assemblyman Jack McEneny, D-Albany, criticized Sematech for its parking lots, and urged McKownville residents to stand tall against it and the other large entities surrounding their neighborhood.

"This is essentially a village surrounded by large and well-funded neighbors," McEneny told about 50 people at the Sept. 23 McKownville Neighborhood Improvement Association.

Crossgates Mall, the University at Albany and the tech park soon to be at the Harriman campus counted among those large entities. Still, McEneny said that those very institutions also enhance the community's life, providing jobs as well as other opportunities.

"I don't like the way Sematech has developed," McEneny said, suggesting that the consortium of computer chip manufacturers build a parking garage rather than continue to construct seas of asphalt for its parking.

"Give us some oxygen back, some green space and, by the way, we don't want to look at it," McEneny said.

Increased traffic and lighting are also concerns that need to be better addressed, he said.

Another big neighbor, the Harriman Campus, which is being developed into a tech park, has a good deal to recommend it, he said.

"A university-connected tech park is a very, very positive thing," McEneny said.

Good jobs will be created, he said,

# Sematech, flyover, flooding

adding that it will likely generate less traffic than the state workers did.

McEneny also talked about some other neighborhood issues including the Thruway to the Northway flyover and Fuller Road flooding.

“The flyover is dead,” McEneny said,

adding that it will require vigilance because it may “rise again.”

As part of its preliminary Albany Corridor Study covering exits 21A to 25A on the Thruway, the Thruway Authority put forth two out of six concepts that

# McEneny

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proposed a flyover on Western Avenue through the McKownville neighborhood. The final study is due out this fall.

As for the long-term problem of flooding on Fuller Road, McEneny said he'd continue to work on it.

"The problem is in no way solved. It's somewhat of a technical problem," McEneny said.

Adding to the difficulty, he said, fixing the problem requires coordination among town, county and state officials.

"There's no solution yet. I'm fighting for any money I can get for it," McEneny said.

A noise wall may be in the works for Fred Abele Park, McEneny announced. He's put a request in to the Thruway Authority, he said.

Don Reeb, president of the association, asked about a Western Avenue park and ride, and McEneny said that he'd like to see one in the Crossgates Mall parking lot.

Other residents asked about pedestrian walkways on Fuller

Road, a county road. McEneny said in cases like that he tries to act as a facilitator among local municipalities. Another resident asked McEneny about the problem of accidents on Ring Road around Crossgates Mall. Inquiries about the ownership of the portion of Ring Road in question makes fixing that problem difficult, Supervisor Ken Runion said.

In other business, the association discussed ways to fight the proposed Shabbos House on Fuller Road. The proposed building at 320 Fuller Road would hold religious gatherings for the Orthodox Jewish students from the University at Albany and serve as a home for Rabbi Mendel Rubin and his family.

The current Shabbos House serves a similar function at 316 Fuller Road. Many neighbors object to the size of the proposed building, which Reeb put at 15,000 square feet, but which zoning board documents say is 10,000 square feet. Runion advised the group to make coherent, concise and plentiful arguments to the zoning board. He noted that town code requires a great deal of

parking to encourage applicants to build reasonably sized structures.

Some residents advocated proposing compromise while others said that might weaken their case.